

## Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:MDRAPER:DPW:EI

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

NEA:ARDA

NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.

P:PHABIB

S/S:-O:RGAMBLE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 171466

EXDIS, FOR SEELYE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: FUTURE CALLS ON CHRISTIAN LEADERS

1. I AGREE THAT, OTHER THINGS BEING EQUAL, IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FOR YOU TO TRY TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE CHRISTIAN LEADERS IN THE FAIRLY NEAR FUTURE. THIS IS NOT AT THE MOMENT OUR TOP PRIORITY, HOWEVER, AND WE DO NOT WANT YOU TO TAKE UNACCEPTABLE RISKS WITH YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY. OUR FEELING HERE IS THAT THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF THE CHRISTIAN CLEAN-UP OF PALESTINIAN AND MUSLIM ENCLAVES IN THE CHRISTIAN-HELD ZONE WILL NOT BE A GOOD TIME FOR TRAVELING ANYWHERE. FOR ONE THING, WE MIGHT EXPECT A SERIES OF RETALIATIONS AND COUNTER-RETALIATIONS TO CONTINUE FOR A WHILE. SECONDLY, IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR YOU TO AVOID LEAVING THE IMPRESSION THAT YOU ARE GOING TO THE CHRISTIANS TO COMPLIMENT THEM ON THEIR MILITARY SUCCESSES.

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2. OUR THINKING HERE IS THAT YOU SHOULD DO YOUR BEST, IN

ANY EVENT, TO GET IN TOUCH WITH SARKIS FIRST, BEFORE MAKING CALLS ON FRANGIEH, CHAMOUN, GEMAYAL, ET AL.

3. NONE OF THE ROUTES YOU HAVE SUGGESTED FOR GETTING INTO CHRISTIAN TERRITORY IS A GOOD ONE, BUT WE HERE FEEL STRONGLY THAT YOU SHOULD NOT RPT NOT TRY THE CAR ROUTE DIRECTLY

ACROSS THE CONFRONTATION LINES WHERE MELOY'S CAR WAS STOPPED. WHEN EXAMINING EVACUATION ROUTES, THE PLO/FATAH PASSED THE WORD THAT THEY COULD SATURATE THE AREA WITH THEIR MEN BUT THEY COULD NOT RPT NOT ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEE THE ELIMINATION OF THE MANY SNIPERS IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA OF THE CROSSING POINT. SOME OF THESE SNIPERS MAY HAVE HEAVIER WEAPONS WHICH COULD NEGATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NEW ARMORED VEHICLES YOU SHORTLY WILL BE RECEIVING.

4. YOU MIGHT WANT TO WEIGH ALSO THE POSSIBILITY OF GOING TO CYPRUS, IF THE AIRPORT OPENS SHORTLY, AND MOVING FROM THERE TO JOUNIE BY BOAT.

5. AS REGARDS THE COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEM, WE MIGHT CONSIDER SENDING AN OFFICER FROM NICOSIA TO JOUNIE TO SET UP ARRANGEMENTS ON THAT SIDE BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL.

6. WE WILL DO SOME MORE THINKING ON THIS MATTER HERE AND LET YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER IDEAS WE MAY COME UP WITH. OUR GENERAL APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE LIKELY GAINS FROM EARLY VISITS TO THE CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP WILL BE SO SLIGHT THAT THEY WILL NOT WARRANT A SIGNIFICANT RISK TO YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY. KISSINGER

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